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Literary Record.

THE WHITE HILLS, their Legend, Landscape, and Poetry. By Thomas Starr King, with sixty illustrations, engraved on wood, by Andrews, from drawings by Wheelock. Boston, Crosby, Nichols & Co.

The White Hills belongs to the same class of literary effort as the *Sketcher* by a Scotch clergyman, the Rev. Mr. Eagles, which work did for British landscape and for art, what the White Hills aims to do—make both art and nature better understood. As the title of the book indicates, it is an æsthetic analysis of the mountain region of New Hampshire. The Rev. T. Starr King acts as the guide through the passes of the White Mountains, along their water courses, and up to their summits, pointing out on his course the subtle elements and virgin haunts of landscape beauty; he quotes pertinent descriptive passages from the works of kindred lovers of nature, coupling with his extracts reflections and pictorial hints which seem to mark a certain degree of intercourse with landscape painters. Historical incidents and scientific facts are woven in with the abstract portions of the work to give it ballast. His artistic companion is Mr. Wheelock, whose pencil crystallizes for the eye that which ideas alone through diction never convey to the mind. Mr. Wheelock has selected prominent views and points of interest among the White Hills to accommodate the text. The best illustrations in the book are from those drawings which are adapted to the capacity of wood-engraving; in others the niceties of pictorial art, the delicacy of the original drawings, such as the gradations of space and the charms of effect, are lost (we would instance the cuts on pp. 14, 268, 355). Of the successful illustrations we would especially mention the pine trees on page 67, and the grand "pinnacle of rock" on page 143, a similar subject on page 183, the cascade on page 206, and where "the river rushes" on page 264. We consider "The White Hills" an eminent success. It is an indispensable companion to the tourist, or sojourner, in the midst of these beautiful mountains.

SIR ROHAN'S GHOST. A Romance. J. E. Tilden & Co., publishers, Boston.

The author of this spectral story, so well written, but disagreeable because of its sombre and unnatural plot, has slightly intruded on the fields so well but not profitably explored by Monk Lewis and Mrs. Radcliffe, neither of whom did much to improve the minds of their readers. The scene is fixed in the west of England; the moral which the author aims to impress being the certainty of retributive justice. Why an author of such unmistakable genius, with more than ordinary descriptive powers, and a fine command of language, should have chosen so repulsive and unnatural a subject, is beyond our comprehension. Such a pen as this author wields, if employed on subjects the reading world takes more interest in, would produce something of real literary value. We yet hope to see it dealing with the mysteries of real life, giving us the bright as well as the dark picture—that the genius which here gives us but a spark may soon brighten into a flame.

Sir Rohan, advanced in life, seeks relief for a guilty conscience in a solitary mansion on the coast of Cornwall. Still he is the victim of a ghostly visitation which flits before him by day, and disturbs his dreams at night. Life has become a burden, and he seeks to overcome the pangs of stricken conscience by dissipation and devotion to art. Still the ghost haunts him, and makes him sigh for something to brighten the path of life.

And here he is brought in contact (not very skillfully however) with a young girl of great beauty and intelligence, who captivates him with the very sweetness of her nature. The influence of her charms acts upon him like the morning dew on a fading flower. The poison that had corroded his heart, has found its antidote in this fair girl, who sympathizes with him in his loneliness. The result of this sympathy is a pure attachment and a mutual exchange of affection. Sir Rohan already sees his future begin to brighten, and his heart beats with joy at the prospect of possessing this angel of his happiness. When, however, the time for sealing his happiness arrives, and the picture seems at the very apex of its brightness, a dark and terrible revelation is made, the light of his hope is extinguished, and an end is put to all that is earthly with him. The ever-haunting ghost, ghastly with blood, stalks in, and Sir Rohan falls dead of terror and a stricken conscience. The author thus draws the curtain over this dark and harrowing tragedy: "Miriam did not observe this at once; she was too greatly bewildered. She saw only a ring in the deep flash of the expiring taper. Suddenly it was dropped into her hand, and Arundle strode toward the house. But it rolled away unregarded in the moments of awful silence that ensued, while Miriam's wild eyes searched for refuge in the dark. The grasp left her hand only to fasten on her shoulder, and Sir Rohan compelled her gaze.

" 'We are standing on your mother's grave,' he said, in a hoarse voice, torn by fragments from a shattered breast. 'You are my child. Look at me. Miriam! Miriam! I am your father.'

"A dreadful noise was in his ears. Like a sword, the ghost struck in a blinding blade of light through his eyes. All the blood in his pulses sung across his brain, and he fell prostrate at her feet."

The author exhibits great power of conception, and a rare ingenuity in the construction of the plot, which, however, is not developed very skillfully.

REMINISCENCES OF RUFUS CHOATE. By E. G. Parker. Mason Brothers.

A great man is gone forever. Boston has lost her Choate, and her sons and daughters have mourned his loss, not in sackcloth and ashes, but in praises and idle worship. To those at all acquainted with the power of admiration that seizes upon Boston, like a burning fever, when the Unseen hand strikes down one of her best beloved, this outpouring of extravagant panegyric will not be surprising. Mr. Parker has performed a labor of love; how wisely, the reader of his book will not need to be informed. There may be reasons unknown to us for this display of friendship—this heaping up of hyperbolic praises over a dead man, ere he is cold in the tomb. Did friendship demand this sacrifice? was public anxiety so impatient to know more of the great lawyer, as to call for this hot haste to lavish fulsome puffery on a man whose real merits deserved a more simple and less cloudy enshrining? We think not. These "Reminiscences," as they now stand, lack most of those attributes which are held by sensible men as essential to a good biography. They are lamentably deficient in literary merit, and it strikes us that Mr. Parker could have better served the fame of his departed friend, to say nothing of his own reputation as a writer, by avoiding the quicksands of metaphor. It is seldom an author exerts all his powers of praise and calls on the gods to aid him in making a divinity of man. And yet such is the mission Mr. Parker has aspired to. According to Parker the world never had a greater

man than Choate. He was the equal of Curran, and not a whit less a lawyer than Erskine. Curran lies under a granite pile, "modelled after the tomb of Scipio. Rufus Choate will sleep in Mount Auburn," the last resting-place of Boston's great and good. Choate was greater than Webster, and in some things more than a match for Pinckney. He had law learning enough for a Lord Chancellor, and a lettered eloquence Hortensius might have admired. Mr. Everett, in Faneuil Hall, said, "there was no one who united to the same extent profound legal learning, with a boundless range of reading . . . and an imagination which rose on a bold and easy wing to the highest heaven of invention." Richard H. Dana was no less celestial in his panegyric. Now it seems to us, simple as we are, that the spirit of Choate ought to rest contented under such an avalanche of glorification, and should forever be deprived of all right to come to this world and disturb the repose of sober-minded people. Mr. Parker, however, is not willing to sign any such treaty. He has heard Brougham, Lord Derby, Peel, the veteran Gladstone, and other English notabilities, but gives it as his solemn opinion that not one of them is equal to Choate. Where shall we go then to find the like of Choate? Mr. Parker evidently would have us make a pilgrimage among the gods, which, considering the extent of this earth, we have no inclination to do at present. It seems to us that all the virtues of Choate's character may be summed up in a very few words. He was a successful lawyer, an undependable politician, timid as a senator, and never rose to the dignity of a statesman. He had great power of language, and was master of the art of swaying the opinions of an unlettered jury. But he was a mystifier, not a clear and concise reasoner. He forced opinions and actions by appealing to the sympathies, rather than the reason. The more desperate the case the more fiercely did he concentrate all his energies, all the fire of his impassioned soul, to gain what at times seemed unworthy ends. He was an herculean worker, but too often wasted his energies in making sympathy gain a mastery over reason. His power of invention was great, and had it been applied to nobler purposes than those of assisting great criminals to escape justice, would have reflected to the good of his country. His oratory was vehement beyond description, and belonged to a style that has passed away in Europe, and will soon die out in this country. Let us honor the great dead discreetly, not at the expense of decency, but with common sense and truth.

VANITY FAIR. F. J. Thompson, Publisher, New York.

Such is the title of what may be called *the American Punch*. Vanity Fair is a weekly periodical in plan like the "London Punch," and, in our opinion, equally good in typographical attributes, artistic ability, and humor. Our community furnishes abundant material for the class of Punch philosophers, and we hope to see their organ firmly established. Among the attractions of the fourth number, we find a *covert* attack upon the naked art question, which makes us regret that we are not in a position to make our indignation felt by stopping subscriptions, instead of advising people to make them. "The Building of the Pemberton Mills," is an architectural essay in the shape of a woodcut, the substance of which is more to the point than any words could convey, and "Substance and Shadow" is one of the choicest things of the kind we know of. Whoever finds himself laughing at the wit of "Vanity Fair," and does not return a *quid quo pro*, is fit for "treasons, stratagems, and spoils."

THE FIRST ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES OF THE COOPER UNION.—We regret that we can do scarcely more than acknowledge the receipt of this interesting report, which comes to us just as we go to press. Of the ably conducted department of architectural drawing the report says:

The Class in Architectural Drawing, is under the direction of Mr. John F. Miller, assisted by Mr. Henry Palmer and Mr. Clarence Cook. The number of pupils in attendance is 117.

It meets on the evenings of Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

The rooms used by this class, as well as the classes in mechanical and freehand drawing, are spacious, and lighted in a manner specially arranged for the purpose. The instruction is given not for show, but with especial reference to the principles of mechanical drawing—mere copying is prohibited, but mechanical models are employed as the means of instruction. For this purpose a complete set of the Darmstadt models have been ordered from Europe, and a considerable portion of them have been received.

LIFE OF MARY STUART, QUEEN OF SCOTS. Sheldon & Company, New York.

Belongs to the "Household Library," a series of entertaining and very useful little books made up of skeleton biographies, and intended to meet the wants of persons content with small quantities and not over nice in the matter of style. If the enterprising publishers would take a word of advice from us, we would suggest that the literary reputation of their firm would lose nothing by employing an editor who can translate French into intelligible English. In the present volume it seems to us the editor has tried hard to see what he could achieve in the way of concealing his meaning under a style so clumsy that we have rarely, if ever, seen anything to compare with it. We are now and then relieved by getting the key to his meaning, and finding it very different from that conveyed by his language. He gives us nothing new concerning the misguided and unfortunate queen, although the field is yet well strewn with gleanings of great value. In truth, we have only the old story badly abridged and sadly disfigured. And yet we ought to be thankful even for this, since the editor condescends to inform us in his preface that "the present is the only work of M. de Lamartine which has appeared solely in an English form, having been expressly translated from the manuscript." It was extremely kind of M. de Lamartine to loan the editor his manuscript, and cruel of the editor to perform such a piece of bad surgery with it.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. HARRY BROWN, of Portland, Maine, kindly permits us to use his name as referee for the CRAYON in that town. Lovers of Art who desire to be informed of the object and character of our periodical, will please apply accordingly.

Our friends in Boston will receive the CRAYON, as heretofore, from Messrs. WILLIAMS & EVERETT, the transfer of our agency as stated in our last number not having been effected. We regret that circumstances beyond our control led to the delay in the delivery of the January number.

CORRECTION.—In the January number, article *Æsthetics*, p. 3, 2d col., line 9 from the bottom, strike out balance of the sentence after the words, "So irony holds itself as," and complete the sentence, so as to read as follows: "So irony holds itself as this on all sides annihilating art—as that *earnest desire* in comparison with the true Ideal which is the aspect of the internal unartistic emptiness."

ERRATA.—Page 8, 1st col., line 16 from the top, for Campagna, read "Compagnia."